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THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 2016

## Cost of water to rise

Residents will see about a \$35 increase  
in their water and wastewater bill  
Page 5

## Nine-month sentence

Niagara man flew into rage when  
he couldn't go out and buy pizza  
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# INPORT NEWS

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## Community pride in historic building



ALLAN BENNER/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Port Colborne community services manager Harry Hakim stands in front of the historic Rosalawn Centre, where community efforts are underway for its restoration.

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## UPFRONT

## Saving Port's 'Yellow Castle'

ALLAN BENNER  
Postmedia Network

Slabs of plywood cover holes in the eaves of the 156-year-old mansion, temporarily keeping critters from finding their way inside.

Nearby, there are obvious signs of deterioration on the brickwork on the exterior walls of Roselawn Centre, 296 Flecken Ave., Port Colborne.

Inside, the third floor was gutted when a restoration process began in about 2009, but was never completed. The original lath and plaster was removed revealing old two-by-four studs, and remains that way to this day.

"It gutted this for a reason," said Port Colborne's community service manager Harry Hakim.

It happened a few years before he started working for the city, and Hakim said he's not certain why the third floor interior was gutted.

"But I think it was to bring more power and bring electrical wiring up to code. They did all that," he said, pointing out some new wiring hung within the exposed rafters.

"Why they got to this stage and then stopped, I don't know."

Although the city has done enough repairs to the building to keep the elements out and prevent further deterioration, Hakim said it needs far more work.

"Obviously, it needs refurbishing up here," he said.



ALLAN BENNER/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Port Colborne community services manager Harry Hakim discusses some of the restoration needs at the historic Roselawn Centre, where community efforts are underway for its renovations.

bushing up here," he said.

Meanwhile, other parts of the building need attention too — inside and out.

"This needs an overhaul to bring it back," Hakim said, pointing out cracked plaster on the interior walls near the main entrance to the building.

The original walnut woodwork surrounding the entrance is hidden beneath layers of off-white paint. "Even the paint, we'd like to get off and bring back the richness of the wood. You can see here on the baseboards," he said. "We've done some things to alleviate some of the challenges, but you can see it needs an overall structural renovation."

Original remnants of the building that were removed over the many years since it was built have also been

At about the same time as the work was underway on the third floor, the city hired consultant Quatrek Group to conduct a study of the building, looking at its potential use for the city as well as the cost of repairing it.

At the time the renovation cost was more \$1.5-million, but it could cost much more than that depending on the scope of the work. In addition to the repairs, the city also needs to make the building wheelchair accessible too which will add to the costs.

Original remnants of the building that were removed over the many years since it was built have also been

uncovered recently.

"We actually found the original turret from the peak up top ... where a flag pole used to be. We want to bring that back and tie it in, hopefully with events for Canada 150," Hakim said, referring to sesquicentennial celebrations taking place in 2017.

City workers also found original windows, as well as wrought iron rails that had once formed a widows walk that surrounded the rooftop cupola, and Hakim hopes to restore those items to the building as well, as part of the renovations.

Applications for upper-tier government funding to help cover the cost of the renovations have not been successful yet, but Hakim said the city remains hopeful that funding could eventually be coming from Port Colborne's way.

In the meantime, a group of Port Colborne residents have taken matters into their own hands to work towards the renovation of the property.

When the city considered selling the building in 2013, a group of residents teamed up to urge city council to retain the property because of its heritage value.

Soon after, Friends of Roselawn Centre was established.

"Ever since February 2014, we've putting a plan together and trying to raise funds to get things going," said the organization's treasurer Pat Bowman. "We've been working with the

## ROSELAWN'S HISTORY

Roselawn was originally built in 1860 as a private residence by Port Colborne businessman Levi Cornwall.

The building at 296 Flecken Ave. has changed hands several times in the many years since.

Another local businessman, Lewis Carter purchased it in 1870 and sold it to his nephew Charles Steele in 1902.

Following Steele's death in 1943, it was leased to the federal government for use as the headquarters

of the Lincoln and Welland Regiment B Company.

In the late 1950s, it became the Port Colborne Club and additions were added to it including the curling rink and dining room bringing the total size to about 22,800 square feet.

The curling rink was transformed into a theatre in 1996 where numerous cultural activities have taken place including Showboat Festival Theatre productions and Canadian Authors Series events.

city at the same time trying to leverage our partnership with the city and collaborate with a few grants. It's a work in progress that's for sure."

Bowman said they're starting at the top and working their way down.

"We have a capital campaign on the go. We're trying to raise \$25,000 just for roof repairs, and we have more than \$20,000 raised," she said.

The roof, she added, is the top priority.

Bowman said her team isn't the first to try to save the building.

"We went back into the history books and this has been going on since 1933," she said. "It's just led to this."

The group's next fund-raising event is An Evening at

Roselawn, on April 7 from 7 to 10 p.m.

It's a silent auction featuring the work of about 40 local artists, who have set reserves on the value of their work. Any additional money raised on the work will be used towards the renovation fund, said Ariene Lessard who organized the event.

"We wanted something new, something unique, and something to benefit our wonderful artists, as well as our marvelous building," she said.

Tickets are \$37 each and available at the Roselawn box office, or by calling 905-834-7572.

CKTB radio personality Tim Denis will serve as master of ceremonies during the event.

Continued on next page

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# Get a lift with web-based ride-matching service

ALISON LANGLEY  
Postmedia Network

A new approach to carpooling has arrived in Niagara.

Niagara Ride Share, a free web-based ride matching service, virtually connects people living in the same neighbourhood so they can share a ride to work, school or appointments.

"It connects commuters to the community," said Cadda Stout, transit program manager with the Town of Fort Erie.

The concept is simple. Participants register online at [www.niagararideshare.ca](http://www.niagararideshare.ca) and enter their driving preferences and destinations.

After that, the system matches participants with other people who are close by and going to the same place at the same time.

There are no fees involved, however, employers can negotiate with each other to split the cost of gas if they choose.

A Brock University student from Fort Erie, for example, whose schedule matches that of another Brock student from Fort Erie can make a connection on the Niagara Ride Share website to get to and from school.

"And, someone from Niagara Falls working in Fort Erie and returning at the

same time that someone from Fort Erie is starting their shift in Niagara Falls can make a connection," Stout added.

Rhonda Barron, a health promoter at Bridges Community Health Centre in Fort Erie, said the two-year pilot program will be beneficial to local residents — and the environment.

"You'll bring down your gas expenditures, save wear and tear on your vehicle and it's also great for the environment because you're reducing your carbon footprint," she said.

The financial savings can be significant, Barron added. A taxi from Fort Erie to Niagara Falls, for example, costs around \$40.

"The cost of living for a family of four in Niagara is just over \$65,000," Barron said.

"Some of the largest expenses are transportation and childcare. If we can't increase wages, we need to look at opportunities to save money and transportation costs are a key piece of that."

Stout and Barron began investigating the possibility of launching a ride share program in Niagara after researching a similar program in London, Ont.

That program began in 2007 and recently expanded to include surrounding rural communities.

Organizers are quick to point out that Niagara Ride Share is not Uber, where consumers submit a trip request on a smart phone which is then routed to drivers who use their own cars.

"With Uber, you contact a driver and they come and pick you up and charge you a fee," Stout explained.

"That is a ride hall service. This is a ride share service where car-poolers come together."

The service, funded through a grant from the Niagara Prosperity Initiative and supported by Bridges and the Town of Fort Erie, was launched last month.

## NIAGARA RIDE SHARE

What: free web-based ride matching service

Where: across the Niagara region

How: Register at [www.niagararideshare.ca](http://www.niagararideshare.ca)

Taralea McLean, executive director at Bridges, said the new program is also a way for people to give back to their community.

"There are many people without a car who could benefit from

a lift to an appointment, event or visiting a family member," she said. "They may live around the corner from you and their destination is close to yours."

Falls Avenue Resort was one of the first employers to register for the service as a way to assist existing and prospective employees in getting to and from work.

Employers, institutions and organizations can contact Barron at 905-871-7621 ext. 2226 to have their organization added to the site.

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## Saving Port's 'Yellow Castle'

From previous page

Bowman said the auction "is part of bringing people back into the building, if like a home welcoming — a reintroduction as a place of art."

The art auction is well-suited to a building that Bowman said is often referred to as "the Yellow Castle of Port Colborne."

It also fits in with long term plans to add an art gallery component to the building, featuring the work of local artists on its walls.

Hakim said the old building seems perfectly suited to an art gallery.

He pointed out decorative wooden rails built into the walls throughout the building. He said they were part of the original home when Levi Cornwall built it in 1860, and were designed for hanging art.

"These rails, you can hang art from them. You hang a chain from those rails down to a certain height so you can hang art at different heights," he said.

Despite it's condition, he said the old building remains a vibrant part of the city.

Hakim said the city is currently booking facility rentals for 2017, and on some days, as many as three events take place there simultaneously.

"We're using it as a community facility," he said.

The work of students participating in an art program run at the centre was left to dry on a table, evidence of the vibrant activity taking place within the building.

"There are all kinds of different classes that we offer here. It's popular and it's great that we can expand and give the community complete access to the facility," he said. "That's what's rewarding, that they can have access to a building that was more of a private club idea."

The building also houses the city's economic development and tourism, and community services offices.

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APR 7

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## Digging Roots

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APR 16

St. Catharines

# I've been thinking about Christ's resurrection

FATHER DAVID GRAHAM SCOTT  
St Ignace of Antioch Orthodox Church

On March 8, I visited the Man in the Shroud exhibit at St. Alfred's Church at Vine and Carlton Streets in St. Catharines. In front of the altar, stretched a replica of the Shroud of Turin, showing the front and the scoured back of a crucified man.

The shroud's documented history started in the 1300s when a pious noble in Italy built a church to house it. But it seems that the shroud had come from Constantinople after Crusaders sacked the city in 1204. Accumulating scientific evidence suggests the probability that the Shroud of Turin is Christ's burial shroud.

One of the posters at the exhibit speculated that the image of the crucified Christ was imprinted on the shroud when his corpse was transformed by the power of his divine nature into a new kind of body.

And so the risen Christ passed through the shroud as he later passed through the rock tomb and later through the locked door behind which the grieving disciples were hiding (John 20).

The shroud was empty. The tomb was empty. Christ had risen.

Christ's resurrection was not the resuscitation of a dead person like Lazarus (John 11). Lazarus would die again, and the Sanhedrin were planning his second death (12:10). The resurrection of Lazarus was a sign of the transforming resurrection that Christ would accomplish.

The risen Jesus was transformed and was not instantly recognizable. Neither Mary Magdalene (John 20) nor Cleopas and her companion recognised him (Luke 24) until later. And yet he could be touched; he invited Thomas to finger his wounds.

He could break bread with Cleopas and later eat a piece of broiled fish and some honeycomb with his other disciples.

St Paul spoke of our resurrection as a change in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye (1 Corinthians 15:52). He said that a person is sown as a natural body, but raised as a spiritual body. He said that Christ, the last Adam, became a life-giving spirit.

Now a spiritual body is not an insubstantial after-image. C.S. Lewis described what heaven is like in his book, *The Great Divorce*. The divorce is between heaven and hell (Luke 16:26). Lewis's novice traveller in heaven finds it hard to walk on heaven's grass because it is so substantial. He can hardly look at devout people he once knew because they shine with such glory. Just so the spiritual body of the resurrection is so substantial that it lasts forever. And we will be transformed like that when Christ comes again to judge the living and the dead and to make all things new (Revelation 21:5).

What has all this to do with us here and now? When Paul was depressed by the

continuing thorn in his flesh, Christ told him, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

John Chrysostom commented that whereas the resurrection is thought to be something in the future, Paul shows that "it happens every day: for when God raises a man again who is in despair and has been brought to the very gates of Hades, he shows no other thing than the resurrection, snatching us out of the very jaws of death the one who had fallen into them."

In the Orthodox Liturgy I address the people, saying, "Christ is in our midst," And they respond, "He is and ever shall be." And we greet each other with these words time after time.

The power of Christ's resurrection extends to us here and now, renewing our faith, reviving our hope, kindling our love, motivating us to do good works.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

## War refugees are people in need. Period

"I'm sick and tired of hearing about war refugees."

That sentence or some variant of it, often expressed with crude vulgarities I won't quote here, has landed in my inbox repeatedly in the past few days.

Dripping with xenophobia and ignorance, these e-mails were the overwhelming response to my column last Thursday about war refugees being displaced to St. Catharines to make room for Garth Brooks fans in Hamilton.

These are discouraging e-mails to read, not because some readers disagree with my point of view - this column exists to encourage debate - but because of the base cruelty with which they are written.

These messages bespeak a willful blindness to human suffering. They express a point of view that says, "Let other suffer until I get what I figure I am due."

In my column I pointed out what seems obvious - bounding war refugees around to seek our entertainment needs is not exactly in keeping with the responsibility of caring for them.

There is nothing wrong with country music (I'm an Albertian, I was basically raised on Garth Brooks' music). And no one is saying Brooks or his fans are bad people. And it is fortunate that St. Catharines agencies and businesses - from local hotels, the Folks Arts Multicultural Centre, YMCA and others - stand ready to help.



GRANT  
LAFLECHE

I wrote that this represents an opportunity for us as a community to walk our talk and live the values we claim to cherish. I also suggested, in a rather off-hand manner, that Brooks could encourage his audience to help those in need and maybe even hand a benefit concert for refugees.

To some readers, this was akin to a slap in the face.

Refugees are ungrateful foreign freeloaders, they wrote, and are given more than any Canadian taxpayer gets. I should stand up for "real" Canadians, they said.

Some perspective here is useful. Refugees are not "freeloaders," with better access to health care and services than citizens. That is a shameful myth.

Refugees were forced to flee the horrors of war, leaving their homes, jobs, even family behind to survive. They didn't want to leave home. They had to. The only other option was to stay and die.

Canada has a long and proud history of sheltering refugees. As a nation, we consider it a responsibility of being a promoter of peace, justice and freedom on the international stage.

Other readers were bizarrely upset that a non-existent church concert won't raise money to help other causes, most commonly expressed as, "Why won't you hold a concert to help Canadian homeless people?"

This particular argument suggests a world where we can only do one thing at a time.

Either we "look after Canada first," or we help the refugees. But we can't do both.

This is utter nonsense.

We struggle with poverty, but we try to alleviate the problem. We have food banks, shelters, advocacy groups and a social welfare system. Ontario is set to begin testing, basic income guarantee schemes to see if that would work better than our current welfare system.

None of this precludes us from helping people from other nations. To suggest otherwise is to ignore reality and uphold selfishness as a virtue.

Perhaps the most troubling comments contained overt xenophobia that could reasonably be described as rank racism.

Several messages contained a variation on this sentence: "I am a white Christian man, and I don't see you defending my rights, just those of these Muslims."

Don't get your white hood in a knot. Being a white, Christian Canadian male is to be part of one of the most privileged demographics on Earth. You likely earn more, have better health care and opportunities, and face fewer obstacles than most other human beings. To suggest, as these readers do, that white

Christians are being oppressed is to embrace a laud fantasy of false victimhood.

It also ignores the facts. Many Syrian refugees are Muslims. But many others are Christians, a targeted minority in that country. Both groups are being put to the sword because they do not worship at the correct altar.

And since when is our willingness to aid another person in crisis limited by their choice of deity?

It is ironic these messages using Christianity as a justification for tribalism are sent on Easter weekend. I am no believer - I look to philosophy and science for ethical guidance - but I remember my Catholic school lessons.

One of the central ethical ideas of the Gospels is that we have a duty to help those in need because they are in need. I do not recall Jesus placing limits on charity or saying to the poor or the sick, "I can't help you until I make sure all my disciples are looked after first."

If, like me, religion is not for you, consider how the ancient Greeks thought about it. They had a wonderful ethical principle that said you should be careful who you turn from your door, for one day it may be you who survives on the charity of strangers.

Wherever you find your inspiration, the fact is we are sheltering war refugees, a responsibility we should accept with pride and compassion.

To do otherwise really would be unCanadian.

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# LOCAL NEWS

## Port water going up \$35

FRANKI IKEMAN  
Postmedia Network

Port Colborne residents will see a roughly \$35 increase in their water and wastewater bill over the course of this year.

The 2016 water and wastewater budget was approved last Monday night at a special meeting of city council.

On the water side, the average user will see an increase of about \$15 annually, and the average user will see about a \$20 increase on wastewater.

Community and corporate services director Peter Senese said the hike, despite Niagara Region announcing a zero per cent increase to its rates, is attributable to forecasted flows for the city.

Senese also said the city is selling less water than

it used to, in part due to the changing landscape in industries and their reduced water use.

Port Colborne ran up deficits in 2015 — \$762,000 in water and \$517,885 in wastewater. Both deficits will be funded through reserves, and don't have an impact on this year's rates, Senese said.

The city has also taken on several capital projects in both water and wastewater, some which began in 2015 and spanning through 2017.

Lakeshore Road West watermain replacement is set to wrap up this year. The city is also replacing water meters citywide and continues to complete fixes and replacements in wake of frozen water services.

On the wastewater side, the city will take on an

infrastructure needs study in 2016 and is looking to do the design for a storm sewer outlet on Elm Street.

### New fee in 2017

The City of Port Colborne has taken the first steps in implementing a new storm sewer drainage fee for 2017. City staff submitted a report to council last Monday outlining some of the ways the new fee could be implemented. Council kept discussion to a minimum on the subject, but passed the report that recommended starting the fee implementation process including holding a couple of public meetings to get input from residents.

The new fee would apply to properties in the urban storm sewer drainage area boundary and would cost \$100 per year for single fam-



FRANKI IKEMAN/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

The Lakeshore Road West watermain project is pictured in Port Colborne.

ily homes.

Senese said other municipalities are starting to look at implementing similar fees

to generate annual funding for storm sewer work.

He said the flat-rate fee is more fair and equitable

than adding funding onto the tax levy. Dates haven't been locked down for the public meetings.

March 31 - April 6, 2016

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FILE PHOTO

Ontario Court of Justice, St. Catharines.

## Conditional sentence for pizza rage

**ALISON LANGLEY**  
Postmedia Network

A St. Catharines man has received a nine-month conditional sentence in connection with a series of events that began after he flew into a rage because he couldn't go out and buy pizza.

It all started the afternoon of Sept. 8, 2015, after James Pollack was unable to get to his car because his common-law spouse's daughter had parked her vehicle in the driveway of his home.

**Continued on next page**



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# Conditional sentence for pizza rage

From previous page

"There's no real explanation as to why he lost control that day," Judge Peter Wilkie said Tuesday in Ontario Court of Justice in St. Catharines.

Pollock, 51, was sentenced to the conditional sentence last Tuesday after pleading guilty at an earlier date to uttering a threat to cause death, committing an assault while armed with a knife, careless storage of six long-barrel firearms, and carrying a firearm for a purpose that is dangerous to the public peace.

Assistant Crown attorney Stacey Sheehan said the defendant threatened to kill the daughter before heading out to get the pizza. When he returned home with the pizza, he brandished a knife, held it close to the woman's throat and repeated his threat to kill her.

Pollock swung the knife several times and the victim received three minor cuts to her hand. During the assault the mother tried to assist the daughter who managed to flee from the residence.

When police arrived, they found Pollock in the basement armed with a gun.

Ten minutes later when the accused left the residence he was arrested.

Police seized six long-barrel firearms that were found unsecured in the basement.

The judge said police showed "admirable restraint" in the way they handled the case.

"There was a brief but potentially very, very dangerous standoff with police when Mr. Pollock retreated to the basement of the house and took possession of a gun," the judge said.

"This could have been a disastrous situation."

Defence lawyer Mike DelGobbo said his client has never been in trouble with the law in the past and that people who know him have said the incident was "totally out of character."

During the term of his sentence, Pollock must abide by a curfew and seek counselling for anger management and substance abuse. He is prohibited from consuming alcohol and cannot go into any premises where alcohol is served.

He was also banned from having any weapons in his possession for 10 years.

alison.langle@summedia.ca

Twitter: @aalsangle

## BERTIE AND CLINTON MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY

DECLARES A 20% REFUND ON AUTO AND 10% ON  
PROPERTY FOR 2015 PREMIUMS



President of the Board Lloyd Roseboom (left) receives refund cheque from Vice-President of the Board Dave Wiley (right) at Bertie and Clinton Mutual's head office.

Bertie and Clinton is a local Mutual Insurance Company that specializes in providing farm insurance to its owning members. By insuring with the company, you can also become a part owner and have a voice in how the company is run. Recently, the company declared a refund from surplus of 20% on auto and 10% on property, liability and commercial premiums in 2015. An amount of \$1,857,807 was refunded to the policyholders provided they had been insured for at least one year and their policy was in force at December 31, 2015. Bertie and Clinton has declared a refund from surplus in nineteen of the last twenty-three years and has provided insurance for the Niagara Peninsula residents since 1860.

The company is run by nine directors who are elected by the policyholders at the Annual General Meeting. Each of the nine directors are elected for a three year term, with three being elected each year. At our 136th Annual General Meeting held March 22, 2016 at the Royal Canadian Legion in Fonthill, Howard Augustine of Wainfleet and Domenico Ioannino of Niagara Falls were elected as Directors and Dave Hippel of Beamsville was also elected as a Director, for a three year term.

Lloyd Roseboom of Port Colborne was elected to serve the Company as the President of the Board and Dave Wiley of St. Catharines will serve the Company as the Vice-President of the Board, for the 2016-2017 year. Rachael Siciliano of Welland is the General Manager/CEO.

As of March 23, 2016, one of our Directors, Larry Hippel, began his well-deserved Retirement. Mr. Hippel has been a Director on our Board from 1980 to 2016 and he served as the President of the Board in 1986, 1992, 1999, 2008 and 2015. We would like to thank Mr. Hippel for his 36 years of service and wish him only the best on his retirement journey.

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## SIU probes incident at Pen Centre

BILL SAWCHUK

Postmedia Network

The province's Special Investigations Unit is probing a confrontation between a teenager and Niagara Regional Police officers at the Pen Centre on St. Patrick's Day.

The 16-year-old Denis Morris High School student is recovering from a concussion as well as various scrapes and bruises.

The Special Investigations Unit is Ontario's civilian oversight agency responsible for investigating circumstances involving police that have resulted in death or serious injury.

John Braggiola, the manager of the Pen Centre, said mall security received a call on St. Patrick's Day about two male subjects causing a disturbance. Niagara Regional Police officers were already at the mall for another incident and took over.

The teen's mother took to Facebook in frustration after saying she was unable to get an explanation for what happened to her son.

The mall allowed the mother to see sur-

veillance video of the incident. She said the video showed police injuring her son during the takedown. She said the video also showed her son was put in a chokehold and taken down again after he was in handcuffs.

The teen can't be named under provisions of the Youth Criminal Justice Act, which protects the identity of a person under the age of 18 who is charged with an offence or who may be under investigation.

The Pen Centre declined to allow the Standard to view the video citing privacy concerns.

Now that the SIU is involved, Const. Phil Gavin said the NRP was prohibited from releasing information or commenting on the investigation.

Gavin said the NRP became aware last Monday, through social media posts, that the teen "may have suffered injuries during an interaction with a police officer involved in the investigation of the disturbance."

On the same date, the NRP contacted the SIU and forwarded the unit their information on the incident.

The SIU stepped in last Thursday.

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# INPORT NEWS



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# TASC presents Viva Las Vegas dinner and show



TASC/SPECIAL TO POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Walter Deveau, vice-president of Therapy and Alternatives for Special Children and Adults, and TASC member Nathan Kacur were part of a performance of Monty Python's Spamalot last year hosted by TASC. The theme this year is Viva Las Vegas.

## SARAH FERGUSON Fort Erie Times

Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra and even dueling Celine Dion will take to the stage later this month at the Crystal Ridge Community Centre. Therapy and Alternatives for Special Children and Adults with Disabilities (TASC) assembles a cast and crew each year that puts on an April performance involving music, movement and plenty

of fun, said TASC president, Nancy Kacur.

This year, the non-profit organization will host two performances of its show at the Crystal Ridge Community Centre on April 22 and 23 with doors opening at 5 p.m., and a roast beef dinner served at 6 p.m. followed by the performance. The theme is Viva Las Vegas.

"Elvis will definitely be in the building. We'll have Elton

John, the Village People, battling Celine Dion and mariouettes. It will be hilarious," Kacur said.

Proceeds from the show will support TASC, which was founded in 1986, and continues to offer music, drama and other programs for individuals of varying disabilities to engage with one another in an encouraging environment. The money will be used to purchase a new portable stage.

"We've ramped it up with (the community's) help," Kacur said about last year's fundraising efforts to purchase a portable ramp.

"Thanks to the generosity of the community we have our ramp. But now we desperately need a portable stage that is both safe and sturdy enough for our performers and that can travel with us."

The cost to purchase the stage is \$8,000 and individuals who make a donation greater than \$500 will receive recognition with their names

## IF YOU GO

**Who:** Therapy and Alternatives for Special Children and Adults with Disabilities.

**What:** Viva Las Vegas, tickets are \$35 and can be purchased at Boggio and Edwards IDA, Our Corner Cafe and Tech Services Niagara.

**When:** April 22 and April 23. Doors open at 5 p.m. and dinner is served by 6 p.m., followed by the show.

**Where:** The Crystal Ridge Community Centre, 93 Ridge Rd. S., Fort Erie

**Why:** To highlight all of the effort and hard work of participants in TASC's music and drama programs.

on a plaque.

Tickets are \$35 and can be purchased at Boggio and Edwards IDA, Our Corner Cafe and Tech Services Niagara, or call Kacur at 905-894-1768.

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# Budget gets a 'big thumbs up'

ALLAN BENNER  
Postmedia Network

Niagara political leaders and social service agency representatives are placing a lot of hope in a federal budget they say promises to address poverty and infrastructure needs within the region.

They hope it will mean fewer Niagara seniors living in poverty, while middle- and low-income families with children will see more money come their way, too. Depending on how much funding comes Niagara's way, it could also mean residents struggling with the cost of housing might eventually no longer need to wait up to seven years before they can move into an affordable housing facility, while property owners might not be asked to pay the cost of leak-

ing water and sewer pipes.

Meanwhile, they hope that regional transit buses could be a big step closer to carrying passengers across Niagara in a timely fashion, and money may be coming Niagara's way for long-awaited projects such as waterfront developments, as well as green infrastructure developments, such as the Shickhuna hydro generating station planned for St. Catharines.

Although details are still being determined of precisely how much funding Niagara communities could



FRANK CAMPION

receive, local politicians and social service agency representatives were enthusiastic about the potential the 2016 federal budget holds for the community.

Rhonda Barron from Bridges Community Health Centre in Port Erie welcomed billions in funding to help bring seniors and families with children out of poverty.

"Obviously, that money is going to land in the hands of those who need it most," she said. "There are definitely some good things that have come out of that."

She hopes that the funding enhancements for seniors and children will also lead to enhanced social and health outcomes.

Despite her enthusiasm, Barron said she was a little disappointed that there was no mention of funding in the

budget for a guaranteed basic income pilot project.

"After the province's announcement that there was an allocation of funds for basic income pilot, I think many of us were hopeful that the feds might have followed suit or offered some direction there as well," she said.

In Welland, Hope Centre executive director Mark Carl was particularly pleased to see the investment planned for affordable housing.

He said many of the individuals who



VANCE BADAWEY

rely on Hope Centre for assistance are employed, but by the time they pay for housing they don't have enough money left to pay for their basic needs.

"We're excited. A big thumbs up on the investment in affordable housing to help individuals who are struggling with homelessness and the cost of housing," Carl said.

The budget earmarked about \$2 billion across Canada for affordable housing, but Niagara Regional Housing chairman Paul Grenier, a regional councillor from Welland, said he's still waiting to learn how much of that money will be spent in Ontario and locally.

"My hope is that it comes with some renovation money, and there is some earmarked for affordable senior housing, and a loan program and some capital funding," Grenier said.

He's eager to learn how much funding the local affordable housing organization will receive, and how it can use it for this year and in the 2017.

"We're going to have a little more flexibility and be able to accelerate some of the building and facilitate some of the building of our partners to help alleviate the wait list

problem," Grenier said.

While Betty-Lou Souler, executive director of Community Care in St. Catharines, said the budget holds "lots of promise" to help the middle-class, while addressing infrastructure needs throughout Niagara.

However, she said she was "cautiously optimistic."

"Of course, the devil is in the details. Let's see how it comes out," she said.

Welland Mayor Frank Campion was particularly pleased to see \$2 billion over four years for water and sewer infrastructure.

"It's kind of a good news story for us at this point," he said.

Campion said funding earmarked for transit services could help cover the cost of making a seamless regional transportation system a reality.

Continued on next page

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# Region ready to rethink long-term care model

MARYANNE FIRTH  
Postmedia Network

A business case will be created to outline options, including health-care hub concepts, for redevelopment of three long-term care homes operated by Niagara Region.

Upper Canada Lodge in Niagara-on-the-Lake and Gilmore

Lodge in Fort Erie, each with 80 beds, as well as Linhaven in St. Catharines with 246 beds, are under review by the Region as they will not meet structural compliance requirements by 2025.

A task force including councillors, regional staff and industry experts, was formed in March 2015 to begin reviewing

options to redevelop them. A 144-page preliminary report, prepared by Deloitte and presented to regional council last Thursday night, outlined possible directions as well as results from initial public consultation.

Redevelopment is a chance to reduce costs and make operation more efficient for

the Region's long-term care beds, said Henriette Koning, the Region's director of seniors services.

Niagara's cost per bed is lower than some municipalities, at about \$185 per bed, but there is potential to lower that further, she told councillors. Those decreased costs can be seen in the private and not-

for-profit sectors, due partly to "improved facility strategy," she said.

Redevelopment allows Niagara to "leverage the project to gain those efficiencies as well."

By moving away from the 80-bed facility model, it's estimated the Region would see a three per cent efficiency, or \$235,000 saving annually, for

a 120-bed home, or five per cent or \$630,000 for a 240-bed home.

According to feedback from the private and not-for-profit sectors, "no one is building facilities with less than 160 beds at this point in time," said Jason Burgess, the Region's director of procurement and strategic acquisition.

## Budget gets a 'big thumbs up'

From previous page

In addition to long-awaited sewer separation projects, funding set aside for water-front developments could also bolster plans of developing the bank of the recreational canal in downtown Welland.

St. Catharines Mayor Walter Szendak called the budget "definitely a good news story for cities."

"It's an opportunity for us to really partner with the federal government to address the gap in infrastructure that we have, here in a community like St. Catharines," he said.

Specifically, he said the Shuckana Hydro project being developed in co-operation with St. Catharines Hydro is shovel ready, awaiting funding to make it a reality.

While the province and city have both pitched in to the cost, Szendak said the green infrastructure announcement within the budget "we're hoping the feds will come to the table with a significant investment that will allow us to get that off the ground."

If approved, he said construction could begin in six months, and it could be operational 18 months later.

"This is right in the wheelhouse of what we're looking at from the federal government," Szendak said. "We're excited to see what the details (of the funding program) are so hopefully, this projects can be one of the first announcements made by the federal government under the green infrastructure program."

Source said she after attending a few pre-budget meetings held throughout Niagara with Canada's federal parliamentary secretary of finance, François-Philippe Champagne, and she was impressed that many of the issues discussed at those meetings found their way into the budget.

"He listened to what we had to say," she said. "It gives you faith because they did listen."

"That was one of the most satisfying parts

of the budget," said Niagara-Centre MP Vance Badway. "We listened. Quite frankly, we did what we said we were going to do."

He said the budget is also "very Niagara-centric," focusing on needs within local communities such as poverty, infrastructure investment, economy, jobs, environment, transit and transportation.

"It's all in the budget!"

St. Catharines MP Chris Bittle said a "shocking" and "appalling" number of Niagara children are living in poverty. The tax-free benefits provided by the Canada Child Benefit may help lift 315,000 children out of poverty.

"It's quite important for Niagara, given the economic standing of many families," he said.

Meanwhile, the 10-per-cent increase for seniors living on their own will have an impact on 900,000 seniors across the country.

In Niagara with one of the largest seniors demographics in the country, he said the funding increase will have a huge impact.

"We've heard a lot from our residents that things are difficult, especially if you're on your own living on old age security and the guaranteed income supplement," he said. Bittle said he looks forward to working with St. Catharines, the Region and other Niagara municipalities to ensure that the region gets its share of the funding.

"We're focused on innovation, growing the economy and addressing the infrastructure deficit," he said.

Badway said "the affects of the budget are going to touch everybody from all areas and all walks of life."

He too, said he plans to work with the communities he represents to help ensure that applications from the communities he represents are "very robust and very much in line with what these programs are asking for."

## In The NEWS

### BOGGIO'S DONATION TO UNITED WAY



Port Colborne, Ont. - Today at 11 a.m., Boggio Family of Pharmacies showed their support for United Way of South Niagara when Larry, Aaron, Kyle and Cathy Boggio, and Donnie Edwards presented a cheque for \$20,000 to the organization.

"We are so proud that we are able to help an organization that does so much for the communities of South Niagara," said Donnie Edwards, Co-Owner at Boggio & Edwards Pharmacy in Ridgeway, Ontario. "We want to ensure that we are able to help the communities we are located in as much as possible."

The group represented United Way of South Niagara's Drama Pope and President David Hawkins of the Boggio Family of Pharmacies Port Colborne location with a cheque for \$20,000. The staff members at Boggio Family of Pharmacies' four locations make donations on dress-down days throughout the year and the owners match the funds.

"After matching our staff donations, we planned on donating just over \$15,000 to United Way of South Niagara this year," said Larry Boggio, Owner of Boggio Family of Pharmacies. "When we heard that the charity was shy of its annual fundraising goal, myself and the other owners decided to increase the donation to \$20,000."

"We are so grateful to have such amazing staff that helped us make this donation happen," added Kyle Boggio, Co-Owner at Boggio Family Pharmacy.

United Way recently reported that they may not meet their annual \$650,000 fundraising goal. Lack of funds would put program funding at risk, something that the Boggio Family of Pharmacies do not want to see happen.

"We hope that other companies will also be inspired to help United Way of South Niagara during this crucial time," said Aaron Boggio, Co-Owner at Boggio & MacGinn Pharmacy in Niagara Falls, Ontario. "When businesses donate, they are ultimately supporting the communities that support their business."

Boggio Family of Pharmacies began serving the Niagara region when they opened Boggio Pharmacy in Port Colborne in 1983. Boggio Family of Pharmacies now have stores in Niagara Falls, Fortville and Ridgeway as well and look forward to serving the Niagara region with exceptional and thorough customer service in the years to come.

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# LOCAL NEWS

## YWCA prepares moms for back to work

MICHELLE ALLENBERG  
Postmedia Network

Women from the YWCA Parenting Plus program received a free spa day last week to make them job ready for upcoming interviews.

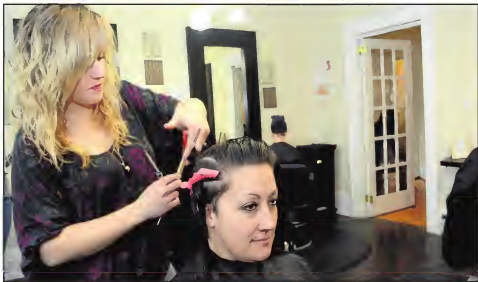
The YWCA in Niagara is the only service provider that offers emergency shelter and transitional housing throughout the region. There are two emergency shelters, for homeless women and children, in St. Catharines and in Niagara Falls.

The YWCA also provides skills development workshops. One of those programs is the parenting plus program which had five women participate in the first classes offered.

The YWCA's pre-employment program for women is for those who are on Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Services and have been out of the work force for a while. The program teaches the women life skills they might need to transition back into the work force. They are assisted in creating resumes and developing interview skills.

The program is 12 weeks long and runs three times a week. It is held at the YMCA on Bunting Street in St. Catharines.

To prepare the women for



Amanda Lamontagne participant in the YWCA parenting plus program gets job ready with the help of Nikki Fairlie, owner of Elan Vitale Salon and Spa.

Interviews or to go back to school YWCA staff provided free haircuts for the participants during the program last Wednesday afternoon.

"Today is meant to boost their self-confidence — give them a me day and help them feel job-ready," Leslie

Beckett, skills development worker at the YWCA, said. "We only have a couple more weeks left of the program and then they are going to be out there doing interviews."

The program is named Parenting Plus because there is a small parenting compo-

nent. It teaches hands-on tools mothers can use with their children, especially when they transition back to work. The participants are taught stress management, time management, what it looks like to be a professional, money management, and

many more skills needed to be a working mother.

The program is free. It's offered to women 25 years old and over who are mothers. Women under 25 can apply for the program if they have completed high school.

Beckett said another aspect

taught during the program is self-care and the importance of doing so. There needs to be a work-life balance in order to be successful.

"I was talking to (participants) ... in order to be there for their children, in order to be the best moms they can be, they need to give themselves that time," Beckett said.

Beckett said this idea of self-care brought about the spa day at Elan Vitale Salon and Spa in Welland.

Amanda Lamontagne is a mother of three children under the age of 13. She said she is always putting her children first and the program has taught her how to take care of herself as well as her children.

"The program has helped me a great deal adjusting with having kids and wanting to go back to work, or even school for that matter," she said.

Lamontagne said she tends to neglect herself, but the program has opened her eyes. She said it showed her she's not alone and there are so many people going through the same thing.

"So far it has been a wonderful experience ... I would definitely recommend this program for other women."

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## Regional housing gets OK to spend its surplus

MARYANNE FIRTH  
Postmedia Network

Niagara Regional Housing will be able to spend its surplus dollars this year on projects ranging from fraud prevention to urgently needed repairs on its properties.

Regional council approved a series of budget requests from the housing organization last Thursday night, to be funded from NRIH's \$883,000 surplus last year.

Included was \$100,000 for a housing fraud prevention strategy; \$40,000 for a caseload and capacity assessment review; \$50,000 for a mobile workforce; \$140,000 for an integrated housing information system; \$25,000 for a strategic plan and \$428,000 for urgent repairs.

Niagara Falls councillor Selina Volpatti, who sits on the NRIH board, felt the surplus should go toward replenishing reserves. The organization took \$393,000 out of its savings in order to meet council's 2016 zero-increase budget guidance.

At a recent corporate services meeting, Volpatti's motion was approved asking those reserves be topped up with the surplus. When the recommendation reached the council table, however, it did not receive the backing it needed.

NRIH board chairman and Welland councillor Paul Grenier asked that the motion to replenish the reserves be defeated and the funding requests as originally brought forward by the board be approved.

Grenier said the \$883,000 surplus was due to "extraordinary circumstance," much of which was credited to a warmer-than-usual winter and resulting savings. Utility bills, he said, came in \$412,000 below budget.

Grenier outlined briefly what each request entailed, including the mobile workforce, a one-time expense to provide staff with tools to work remotely; the integrated information system, a soon-to-be mandatory data management program for housing authorities; and the urgent repairs — \$429,000 for replacement of two aging apartment elevator generators, which had to be immediately addressed.

He also spoke briefly about the fraud prevention strategy, which is meant to identify abuse within the housing system.

Corporate services commissioner Maurice Lewis confirmed that because the additional requests will be funded through surplus dollars, they will have no impact on the tax levy.

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# LOCAL NEWS

## Still room for vendors at Pelham Home Show

**ALLAN BENNER**  
Postmedia Network

Home show organizers face some tough competition, working to bring in vendors as well as shoppers looking for products and service to spruce up their homes.

For the Fonthill Kinsmen who are preparing for their 21st annual Pelham Home and Garden Show, April 22 to 24, that competition has usually come from St. Catharines where the Niagara Lifestyle Spring Home Show held has been taking place for a quarter of a century.

But now in addition to the home show in St. Catharines taking place this year from March 28 to 30 at the Seymour-Hannah Sports Centre, 240 St. Paul St. W., Pelham Home Show organizer Dave Ripley said they're also facing competition from the big event at the Scotia Centre in Niagara Falls that took place a few

weeks ago.

While exhibitors sometimes set up booths at more than one event, he said that's not always possible for many business owners who are already too busy running their respective companies to spare the manpower for home shows.

With a little more than a month to go before the Pelham Home and Garden Show begins at the Pelham arena, 1120 Haist St., Ripley said they still have about a dozen spots to fill for a total of 88 vendors.

"We need a few more, not a heck of a lot, but we're still looking for some," he said.

But in addition to recruiting vendors, Ripley said "then you're always fighting for the patrons to come in."

But the Kinsmen, he added, focus on drawing shoppers from south Niagara communities, rather than St. Catharines and Niagara Falls.

"We are really going after people from Fonthill, Welland, Port Colborne and Wainfleet," Ripley said.

The Kinsmen, he added, aren't expecting to bring in the same attendance as the shows in Niagara's largest cities. But the people who do visit are more receptive to the vendors who are there.

He said vendors that have participated in the past have told him: "You have less people coming through the show, but we get a lot more leads from your show than we do at any other show."

Despite dealing with competition from events in neighbouring communities, the Kinsmen won't be in competing with another local home show that began a few years ago in Welland.

In May 2014, Welland businesses Urge To Purge teamed up with a few other local companies to organize a home show held at Riverstone Event Centre on River

Road.

That event featuring 42 vendors "was a home run," said Lynn Melloni from Urge to Purge.

But organizing it was also a lot of work.

"Unfortunately, we are so busy and so involved in urge to purge that we have very little time to do justice to it," she said.

However, she didn't rule out bringing it back in 2017.

"Let me think about it for next year. I maybe able to get a few people involved, because it was such a wonderful day and it was so good for the city," she added.

More information about becoming a vendor at the Pelham Home and Garden Show is available by contacting Ripley at 905-982-5598, or by email, dave.kinsmenhomedshow@gmail.com/.

ABenner@postmedia.com  
Twitter: @ABenner1



FILE PHOTO

Visitors peruse the 2014 Pelham Home Show at the town's Haist Street arena.



**Niagara Health System**  
Système De Santé De Niagara

### Niagara Health System recruiting two members for Board of Directors

Niagara Health is inviting applications for two (2) new Directors on its volunteer Board of Directors.

A multi-site hospital serving the residents of Niagara, Niagara Health provides a wide range of inpatient and outpatient clinics and services, including care in the following service areas: Medicine, Surgery, Emergency and Urgent Care, Kidney, Cardiac, Mental Health and Addictions, Cancer and Long-Term Care.

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Please read the role description and download an application form available on our website, [www.niagarahhealth.on.ca](http://www.niagarahhealth.on.ca).

To express your interest, please submit the completed application and your resume to Dr. Barry Wright, Chair, Nominating Committee c/o Danielle Dube by April 8, 2016.

For more information, please call Danielle Dube at 905-378-4647 ext. 43103 or email [Danielle.dube@niagarahhealth.on.ca](mailto:Danielle.dube@niagarahhealth.on.ca)

**MICHELLE ALLENBERG**  
Postmedia Network

Donna Abbott hopes to see some busy shoppers at Women's Shopping Day at Port Colborne's Guild Hall this coming Saturday.

A fundraiser, the event is a chance for women go to one spot to see a variety of items and support St. James and St. Brendan Church.

There will be about 20 vendors, including Pampered Chef, Leggings, Younique, Steeped Teas and Thirty-One.

"There's a woman who does pebble art. There's a woman who does beautiful wreaths ... everything in one spot," Abbott said.

She was looking to host an event that was "a little different" and decided a ven-

dor market was perfect. She said she had done a craft show last year that went over well, so she thought a vendor show might do just as well.

All of the proceeds will go to the church of which Abbott is a member. She is hoping to raise about \$600 to fund its various programs.

"They have the Out of the Cold program, they have a youth program, they have a seniors group. So it can be used any which way," she said.

Vendors are donating an item for a highest bid table. Abbott said the item will be a surprise for everyone, including herself.

The event is free to enter and will run 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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